

"Yes/' said I>or:an. "And I am afraid,, Francis, that I have cm other errand for you. \What is the name of the man at Richmond who supplies Selby with orchids?"

** Harden, sir."

"Yes—Harden. You must go do%vn to Richmond at once, see Harden personally,, and tell him to send twice as many r.rchMs as I ordered, and to have as few white ones as possible. In fart, I don't ^ ant any white ones. It is a lovely day, Francis, and Richmond is a very pretty place,, otherwise I wouldn't bother you about it.*'

"No trouble, sir. At what time shall I be back?"

Dorian looked at Campbell. " How long will your experiment take, Alan? " he said, in a calm, indifferent voice. The presence of a third person in the room seemed to give him extraordinary courage.

Campbell frowned, and bit his lip. "It will take about five hours," he answered.

"It will be time enough, then, if you are back at half-past seven, Francis. Or stay: just leave my things out for dressing. You can have the evening to yourself. I am not dining at home, so I shall not want you."

"Thank you, sir," said the man, leaving the room.

"Now, Alan, there is not a moment to be lost. How heavy this chest is! I'll take it for you. You bring the other things." He spoke rapidly, and in an authoritative manner. Campbell felt dominated by him. They left the room together.

When they reached the top landing, Dorian took out the key and turned it in the lock. Then he stopped, and a troubled look came into his eyes. He shuddered. "I don't think I can go in, Alan," he murmured.

"It is nothing to me. I don't require you," said Campbell, coldly.

Dorian half opened the door. As he did so, he saw the face of his portrait leering in the sunlight. On the floor in front of it the torn curtain was lying. He remembered that the night before he had forgotten, for the first time in his life, to hide the fatal canvas, and was about to rush forward, when he drew back with a shudder.

What was that loathsome red dew that gleamed, wet and glistening, on one of the hands, as though the canvas had sweated blood? How horrible it was!—more horrible, it seemed to him for the moment, than the silent thing that he knew was stretched across the table, the thing whose